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ABSTRACT

Currently available British and American materials for teaching English listening comprehension to non-native speakers are covered in this bibliography. Most items listed include student's workbook and teacher's manual, and most are accompanied by tapes. Materials are grouped under four headings: (1) materials whose primary focus is conversation, (2) materials for teaching comprehension of narrative passages, (3) comprehensive (four-skill) courses and other materials which have good listening components, and (4) other materials. Each entry provides bibliographic information and a brief four-part classification which indicates level, variety, source (authentic or scripted), and suitability for independent study. Materials that the authors have used are given additional annotation. Seventy-four items are listed, almost all dating from the 1970s or 1980s. Five pages of suggestions for choosing and evaluating listening comprehension materials are appended. (Author/JB)

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A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF TEXTS AND MATERIALS FOR TEACHING ENGLISH LISTENING COMPREHENSION

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I. INTRODUCTION

This is a bibliography of currently available British and American materials for teaching English listening comprehension to non-native speakers.[1] Most items listed are published in two parts: a student's workbook, and a teacher's manual or self-study edition with a transcription of the recording and a key to the questions in the student's book. Unless otherwise noted, all materials listed are accompanied by tapes. We have included a few items for teacher reference, and some materials with video tapes. We have excluded texts which concentrate exclusively on pronunciation or structure drills. For bibliographies of books and articles on the theory and practice of teaching listening comprehension see Nord (1980) and ERIC (1977).

Materials are grouped under four headings: 1) materials whose primary focus is conversation; 2) materials for teaching comprehension of narrative passages; 3) comprehensive (four-skill) courses and other materials which have good listening components; and 4) other materials. Each entry provides bibliographic information and a brief four-part classification; materials that the authors have used are given additional annotation.

The four-part classification indicates: 1) variety: A means that the recorded material is entirely or primarily in American English; B indicates British English. 2) level: materials are very roughly divided into beginning, intermediate or advanced levels of difficulty. 3) source: authentic or scripted. Authentic means that the recorded material is spontaneous and unrehearsed; it may be a conversation, interview, or a narration told to a responsive hearer in a spontaneous manner. However, very few of these are absolutely "authentic"; since they were not recorded secretly, the speakers are more or less aware of the microphone. And speakers frequently seem to be conscious of the fact that their speech is going to be used for a textbook. Scripted refers to: a) conversations,

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narrative passages or lectures written for English teaching purposes; b) authentic English prose (passages from literature, nonfiction, journalism, etc.) read out loud; c) formal speeches intended for native speakers. 4) IS: Items so marked are suitable for independent study, provided the learner uses the "teacher's manual" or "independent study edition" with transcripts of the recordings and answers to the exercises.

This article concludes with a few suggestions for choosing and evaluating listening comprehension materials.

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1. The idea for this bibliography grew out of a presentation by Sharon Bode on listening comprehension given at a JALT (West Kansai) meeting on August 2, 1981. Susser would also like to acknowledge the assistance of the L.L. Staff, Doshisha Women's College.

II. LISTENING MATERIALS FOR CONVERSATION

Bennett, Matthew. Points Overheard. London: Macmillan, 1974. B/intermediate/scripted(?)/IS. 15 interview-style conversations on a variety of topics. Speech on the tape is clear, but almost natural, and in a variety of dialects. Comprehension questions are sometimes irrelevant and learners experience difficulty identifying speaker's voices and therefore have trouble answering some questions.

Blundell, Lesley and Jackie Stokes. Task Listening. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981. B/low intermediate/ mostly authentic, but with EFL listeners in mind/IS. 26 units of short dialogues or conversations, each with a task to be completed - graphs, maps and pictures abound. Difficulty varies, but the tasks are a welcome change from the usual comprehension questions. Interesting short reading and writing activities follow each listening exercise.

Boyd, John R. and Mary Ann Boyd. Connections. New York: Regents, 1981. A/intermediate/scripted. 25 units in a "functional" text; the first part of each is a one-sided phone conversation with comprehension questions asking students to guess and infer information not heard. (Tapes not heard)

Cornelius, Edward T. Interview. New York: Longman, 1981. A/advanced/

authentic/IS. 10 units consisting of a pre-listening reading and vocabulary study, a real-life interview, comprehension questions and practice in summarizing. Interviews are completely natural, most exercises are typical, but some are insightful and challenging for the learner. The m-c comprehension questions, however, tend to check grammar rather than listening, since usually only one of the responses is grammatically correct.

Crymes, Ruth et.al. Developing Fluency in English. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc, 1974. A/advanced/scripted and authentic. One of the earliest listening texts on the market, still with a lot to recommend it. Different styles of speaking are in each of the 9 topic-centered units: formal summary, informal recall and discussion - all about the material contained in a reading. Discussion questions ask for general recall of material; teachers have to develop further exercises. Other exercises are for writing, sometimes unrelated to the passages.

Dickinson, Leslie and Ronald Mackin. Varieties of Spoken English. London: Oxford University Press, 1969. B/advanced/authentic/IS. Listening materials that can be used independently or with Mackin and Carver's A Higher Course of English Study (Oxford University Press). 14 units of which two are scripted conversations, one a dramatic reading and the others unscripted conversations, mostly on academic topics. Exercises include m-c comprehension questions, dictation, m-c hearing (for specific phrases) and problems of stress, intonation and grammar. See Whiteson below.

Fredrickson, Terry L. Meeting People. London: Longman, 1980. B/intermediate/authentic. 8 units of real-life interviews in, at best, a psuedo-listening text. Learners listen to and memorize interview questions, then are to ask them during the appropriate "holes" in the interviews. Each unit consists of questions to memorize, uninspired comprehension questions (few), and the rest is discussion questions and attempts at practice. Technically it's a disaster - the learner or teacher must flip back and forth constantly, both in the book and on the tape, to follow the sequence required.

Geddes, Marion and Gil Sturtidge. Listening Links. London: Heinemann, 1979. B/intermediate/scripted. 15 units on general conversational topics designed to practice listening for details with a discussion and problem-solving goal. Each unit makes use of "jig-saw" listening - 3 learners or groups of learners each listen to one of three extracts about the topic, all with incomplete or ambiguous information, then answer questions or fill in charts with the information they glean. Finally all get together to combine their knowledge and solve one or more problems. Oral exercises (dialogue building) are meant to practice the language necessary for the discussions. Units vary considerably in the ease of extracting information from the tapes as well as in solving the problems. Speakers are fast and approach authenticity, including slurred words and interruptions.

Gore, Lesley. Listening to Maggie. London: Longman, 1979. B/intermediate/mostly scripted/IS. Part of the Longman Listening Series. 5 units of 6 parts each. Interesting contextualized exercises on the interrelationship of stress/intonation and meaning; different meanings of the same word in different contexts; etc. Speech on the tape sometimes simulates authentic speech. The answers to many of the exercises are given on the tape.

Hodlin, Tim and Susan Hodlin. Project Aftermath: English for Technical Purposes. London: BBC, 1979. B/intermediate/scripted/IS. A 40-episode radio drama/mystery about the aftereffects of a nuclear explosion. A minimal number of comprehension questions are included in each episode; the emphasis is on learning to use technical English for problem-solving. The story is so interesting that learners do not want to slow down and global listening for overall meaning becomes almost automatic.

James, Gary, Charles G. Whitley and Sharon Bode. Listening In and Speaking Out. New York: Longman, 1980. A/intermediate/authentic/IS. 10 units covering a variety of conversational topics, each with a monologue (usually a humorous anecdote), a conversation and exercises (dictation, m-c questions, retelling, cloze, vocabulary and discussion.) M-c questions are well-thought-out and together with the dictation help to focus the learner's attention on major points, although the dictation portions leave much too little time for learners to write. Almost the only American text with completely natural speech - replete with false starts, interruptions, unfinished sentences, people talking simultaneously and grammatical

errors. Teacher should be ready to preview material with class before starting each unit and to allow numerous listenings.

Kingsbury, Roy and Roger Scott. It Happened to Me. London: Longman, 1980. B/advanced/authentic/IS. Part of the Longman Listening Series. 5 units, each consisting of an unrehearsed story told informally to responsive listeners. Very interesting exercises (dictation on grammar points, vocabulary, arranging pictures in order, T/F/can't tell, etc.) teach how to guess meaning from context, follow a theme despite interruptions, recognize intention of speakers, etc. Speech on the tape is natural; an effort has been made to simulate real speech for the exercises, too. The answers to many of the exercises are given on the tape.

Maley, Alan and Alan Duff. Variations on a Theme. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978. B/advanced/scripted. 61 sets of 3 or 4 short dialogues built around a specific theme and function. Almost all of the dialogues are ambiguous or mysterious in some way to motivate discussion, Each set of dialogues has questions to initiate discussion, model expressions to use and ideas for class practice. The speech on the tape is rapid and reasonably natural if occasionally a bit histrionic.

Maley, Alan and Sandra Moulding. Learning to Listen. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981. B/intermediate/scripted. Set of listening passages with language tasks. (Not seen)

Maley, Alan and Alan Duff. Beyond Words. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976. B/advanced/scripted/IS. 20 units, each consisting of a reading and a listening comprehension passage on a related subject; the passages are taken from journalism or popular scientific writing. Each listening comprehension passage has m-c and T/F comprehension questions and vocabulary questions. The tape has a standard reading and a paused version of each passage; the speech is radio lecture style.

Messerschmitt, Dorothy. Listening for Structural Cues with the Mini-Check System. San Francisco: The Alemany Press. beginning. (Not seen)

Morrow, Keith. Advanced Conversational English Workbook. London: Longman, 1978. B/advanced/authentic/IS. Workbook for listening practice

using some of the materials studied in Crystal and Davy's Advanced Conversational English (Longman, 1975). 11 units with many interesting exercises, including some programmed lessons. Very advanced. Speech on the tape is completely authentic, with a variety of British accents.

Mortimer, Colin. Dramatic Monologues for Listening Comprehension. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980. B/advanced/scripted. 24 intriguing monologues that are well-read, with questions designed to go into those areas not usually handled in listening texts - inferences, implications, etc. Learners try to guess where the monologue takes place, who the listener and speaker are, what the relationship between them is, etc. Approaches testing rather than teaching, because there are no exercises other than the questions, and no hints are given as to how the learner should proceed with the tasks set. However, still a good contribution in an otherwise neglected area. Best used in classes where the learners can discuss and compare impressions and guesses.

O'Keefe, J.J. et.al. People Overheard. London: Macmillan, 1975. B/intermediate/scripted/IS. 15 dialogs or conversations in a variety of locations. Speech on the tape is fairly clear, and in a variety of dialects. Y/N and m-c questions are uninspired and sometimes irrelevant.

O'Neill, Robert. Interaction. London: Longman, 1976. A "functional" course in three sections: section one contains stories and dialogues with various kinds of drills (10 units); section two consists of 5 interviews with "functional" practice (i.e., studying different ways of saying the same thing); section three contains 10 listening comprehension passages (2-3 minute stories narrated by a single speaker) with comprehension and vocabulary questions and more "functional" practice. The speech on the tapes for the dialogues and interviews is often unnatural and sometimes painfully stagy; the narrations are good for this level.

O'Neill, Robert and Roger Scott. Viewpoints: Interviews for Listening Comprehension. London: Longman, 1974. B/advanced/authentic/IS. 15 real-life interviews on current British social and economic topics. Each unit has introductory and supplementary reading passages, vocabulary lists, comprehension questions, discussion questions and "language practice." The interviews are usually interesting and the comprehension questions good;

the "language practice" consists of comprehension and substitution drills, most of which are either silly in themselves and/or assume a far lower ability in English than do the listening questions. The taped interviews are authentic and usually natural but sometimes give the impression that the speaker is aware of his/her ultimate audience.

Owen, Roger. People Talking. London: BBC, 1976. B/advanced/authentic/IS. 23 BBC radio programs based on short, real-life interviews. Topics are interesting, and m-c questions touch on not only comprehension but also interpretation; consequently, the suggested "correct" answers are sometimes dubious. Each unit also includes general language comments and structural practice based on the interviews.

Rost, Michael and Robert K. Stratton. Listening in the Real World. Tempe, Arizona: Lingual House, 1978. A/advanced/scripted/IS. Designed to teach the learner to understand reduced forms in spoken English; 36 presentation lessons introduce many of the contractions and coarticulations used unconsciously by native English speakers. Speakers are very quick and natural, except in the example dialogues where they get stagy. However, a valuable contribution in an area otherwise untouched.

Rost, Michael A. and Robert K. Stratton. Listening Transitions. Tucson, Arizona: Lingual House, 1980. A/intermediate/scripted. The first section of each of the 25 "functional" units is a less thorough and less careful presentation of the material in the author's Listening in the Real World (see above). The second part is a conversation using the reduced forms, followed by comprehension questions, summary writing and a cloze exercise. Tapes are OK, if sometimes rather put-on.

Underwood, Mary. Have You Heard...? Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979. B/advanced/authentic/IS. 20 chapters, each with three one-minute conversations illustrating the same "function." There is an introduction, vocabulary list and three or four exercises for each conversation. Listening exercises include m-c, T/F and vocabulary questions, dictation, etc. Other exercises have nothing to do with listening; some are useful for stimulating conversation, but the grammar exercises are dreadful. Most of the taped conversations are interesting, if difficult. (Is

intended to prepare students to use Listen to This! and What a Story!, described below.)

Underwood, Mary. Listen to This! Second edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975. B/advanced/authentic/IS. 20 units of recorded conversations (3-5 minutes in length) with people who provide various community services. M-c and open-ended comprehension questions. There are only short background readings and no vocabulary lists; in part as a result, students cannot find the answers to the questions in the printed matter and must listen to the tape. Recorded material is interesting and natural.

Underwood, Mary. What a Story! Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976. B/advanced/authentic/IS. 20 stories (3-8 minutes in length) told in a conversational style by persons who themselves were involved in or concerned with the events related. Comprehension, vocabulary and dictation exercises; also some poor exercises on grammar and discussion. Excellent stories and tape. As in Have You Heard...? and Listen to This!, the speakers come from various parts of the British Isles and speak with many different accents and dialects.

Underwood, Mary and Pauline Barr. Listeners. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980. B/intermediate-advanced/authentic/IS. 2 series of slickly put-together, radio show-style listening programs arranged around topics, including even annnouncer and music. Each series includes three books, 2 topics in a book. Short listening sections are followed, and sometimes preceeded by, many well-thought-out exercises covering a wide variety of listening skills.

Whiteson, Valerie and Ronald Mackin. More Varieties of Spoken English. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977. B/advanced/authentic/IS. 12 units, related to Mackin and Carver's A Higher Course of English Study, Part 2 (Oxford University Press). Authentic conversations or lectures by educated speakers on mostly academic subjects. Comprehension exercises include dictation, vocabulary and fairly difficult content questions; there are also pronunciation, grammar and cloze drills. The speakers use several dialects of English and there are one or two non-native speakers. See Dickinson and Mackin above.

Winitz, Harris. The Learnables. Kansas City: International Linguistics Corporation, 1978. A/beginning/scripted/IS. 80 lessons, each containing 100 pictures and structurally-graded words, phrases and sentences to describe the pictures, repeated twice with each picture. An unusual set of materials, because it attempts to teach basic English without resort to grammar explanations or translations. Vocabulary and structures are repeated frequently and at planned intervals so that the learner assimilates both. Designed for home study, the meaning of the pictures is usually clear, but periodic sessions with a teacher for review and clarification make the course more valuable to the learner. Stories that begin to appear shortly after basic vocabulary and structures are often hilariously funny and hold learner interest. The first 40 lessons have only one speaker, but the second 40 have more than one plus sound effects. However, the speakers are unnaturally slow throughout.

The theoretical basis for these materials is described in Winitz and Reeds (1975), which is not, as the authors freely admit, meant to be an experimental study. It might best be described as an argument. Teachers planning to use these materials should be aware of two points. First, the format of The Learnables is quite different from that of the materials described in the monograph. In particular, Winitz and Reeds stress the importance of problem-solving as "the most effective procedure to teach the internalization of grammatical rules." (24) In the monograph, problem-solving is taught by reinforcement using a mechanical device which provides the learner with a choice for each item heard, quite different from the method used in the published materials, which gives choices only in the ten-item tests after every second unit. The second point is that Winitz and Reed state that "we need prepare only one program for each of the natural languages we wish to teach." (69) It does not matter what the learner's native language is; the important thing is to prepare materials that teach the learner to induce the rules of the target language, and the materials described in the monograph are very carefully designed with the syntax of German in mind. But the published materials are just the opposite; the same set of pictures is being sold to teach several different languages.

III. NARRATIVE LISTENING MATERIALS

Abbott, Gerry. What Next? Practice in Listening Fluency. London: Longman, 1976. B/beginning/scripted. (No tape). 12 units of folk tales adapted and graded so that specific sentence patterns occur in each episode and successive episodes contain similar actions and situations to help the student predict what is coming. Designed to teach "listening with anticipation." An application of repetition and pattern drills to teach listening. The language of the stories is very artificial. The student's book contains only the texts of the stories and there are no comprehension questions in the teacher's handbook.

Annand, William S. Lectures for Listening Comprehension. Boston: American Language Academy. Recorded lectures (4-8 minutes long) with m-c comprehension questions. (Not seen)

Berman, Michael. Take Note; Materials for Aural Comprehension and Note-Taking in English. Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1980. B/intermediate/scripted. 24 short passages of journalistic writing on subjects of general interest. The book gives the texts of the passages and "specimen notes," which are just lists of the main points of each passage. The book contains no exercises. The speech on the tape illustrates several varieties of English. The passages are read in a slightly ridiculous pseudo-dramatic style.

Black, Colin. Advanced Listening Comprehension. London: Evans Brothers, Ltd. (not seen) 10 recorded passages graded in style of speech and difficulty. Different accents are used. Difficult.

Brittan, Keith. Advanced Listening Comprehension Practice in English. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1974. (Not seen)

Byrne, Donn. Listening Comprehension Practice. Revised edition. London: Longman, 1977. B/intermediate/scripted. 20 short passages with m-c questions and suggested questions for classroom discussion, such as adding details, precis and distinguishing essential elements. The stories were

written for language teaching and vary in quality from acceptable to deplorable. The speech on the tape is natural but dramatized radio style.

Byrne, Donn and Susan Holden. Note-taking. Revised edition. London: Longman, 1976. A/advanced/scripted. 15 units of short to medium passages including personal narratives, journalistic accounts and academic lectures. The exercises include completion, T/F and outlines; some require reasons and reasoning. Some units have 2 or 3 speakers debating a point. The speech on the tape is dramatized radio style.

Fergusen, Kenneth. Listen and Choose. London: Evans Brothers, Ltd. (Not seen) Practice for the Cambridge First Certificate, Paper 4. 35 short extracts from literary works.

Fergusen, Nicolas and Máire O'Reilly. Listening and Note-taking. London: Evans Brothers Ltd., 1977/78. B/advanced/scripted/IS. Practice in listening to lectures. Part 1 consists of 10 passages for practicing immediate recall by answering questions given on the tape. Part 2 gives practice in making outlines, such as finding the central idea, separating relevant and irrelevant material, etc. Part 3 has 8 passages for simultaneous note-taking. Most selections are on current events or academic topics. The speech on the tape is a fast reading or radio-lecture style. Supremely difficult.

Fowler, W.S. First Certificate English. London: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1975. B/advanced/scripted/IS. Section one contains sound discrimination exercises; sections two and three have short (2-3 minute) passages, mostly literary, with m-c comprehension questions. Speech on the tape is formal radio-lecture style.

Hill, L.A. Stories for Reproduction (First, Second and American Series). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965, 1977. B or A/intermediate/scripted/IS. Readings of short, humorous anecdotes with accompanying comprehension questions and vocabulary and structure exercises. Each series has a book at each of three levels - 1000, 1500, and 2075 words (very arbitrarily chosen). Readings are slow and quite histrionic.

Hill, L.A. Note-taking Practice. London: Oxford University Press, 1968. B/advanced/scripted. 16 lectures for note-taking practice; fourth book in Hill's series Stories for Reproduction (see above). Lectures are about 1,800 words in length on a variety of academic and technical subjects within a c. 2,000-word vocabulary. This book is not a textbook; it contains only the texts of the lectures so teachers will have to make their own exercises. The speech on the tape is formal radio-lecture style, sometimes a bit too slow and unnatural.

James, K. et.al.. Listening Comprehension and Note-taking. London: Collins, 1979. (Not seen)

Kisslinger, Ellen and Michael Rost. Listening Focus. Tokyo: Lingual House, 1980. A/intermediate/scripted. 21 3-5 minute talks on a variety of topics, with pre-listening vocabulary, focus and T/F questions, dictation and other reading and writing exercises. The two speakers are ultra-clear and sound like they are reading aloud. The T/F questions are frequently so easy that the adults the material is intended for do not need to have heard the talks at all to answer them; focus questions, on the other hand, require a considerably higher level of English speaking ability to answer.

Martin, M.H. Coombe. Listening and Comprehending. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1970. B/intermediate/scripted. Set of listening comprehension tests: 46 "preliminary" and "advanced" units (1-5 minutes long) with vocabulary, m-c and open-ended questions. Tapes are all done by the same speaker and are painfully slow. Gets very difficult rapidly.

McDonough, Jo. Listening to Lectures. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978. B/advanced/authentic/IS. A series of recordings of academic lectures in the fields of biology, computing, government, mechanics and sociology. The tapes are recordings of actual lectures being delivered to university classes, so the speech is a natural lecture style, complete with hesitations, false starts (and student coughs), and is not the formal radio-lecture style with its artificial perfection. Each tape is accompanied by a booklet which contains a variety of exercises, and answer key and a tapescript. The exercises are designed to aid comprehension and teach note-taking by identifying main points, cloze, completion (including

completion of diagrams), T/F requiring a reason, vocabulary, filling in outlines, etc. The speech on the tapes is natural; high quality recording gives the ambience of the lecture hall.

Morley, Joan. Improving Aural Comprehension. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1972. A/intermediate/scripted/IS. 8 units, each containing 10 to 20 lessons (5-10 minutes each), graded from easy to difficult within each unit. A major course designed to prepare non-native speakers to understand university lectures. Excellent coverage of basic expressions likely to appear in the humanities and sciences. Much dictation but also many ingenious exercises demanding analysis as well as comprehension. The tapes (11 90-minute cassettes) have a lot of background noise and the speech is usually rather slow and overly clear.

Morley, Joan. Listening Dictation. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1976. A/beginning/scripted. 8 units of 4 lessons each; each lesson consists of 10 to 15 dictated sentences and one m-c question based on each sentence. The lessons reinforce basic English grammatical patterns and correspond to the sequence of Krohn's English Sentence Structure (The University of Michigan Press). The material is graded so that difficulty increases in terms of sentence length and complexity, in speed of delivery and in time allowed for writing. The aim of this material is to develop basic skill in "discriminative listening," extracting meaning by attending to grammatical relationships. The lessons are not contextualized; each sentence is independent. The speech on the tape is suitable for dictation.

Morrow, Keith. Listening Comprehension Tests for Proficiency. London: Longman, 1977. A/advanced/scripted/IS. 10 tests of 4 passages each, corresponding to the Listening Comprehension test (Paper 4) of the Cambridge Proficiency in English examination. The passages are mostly academic and literary works, with m-c comprehension questions. The tape has only 5 of the 10 tests in the book. Each passage is read twice on the tape, once in a radio-lecture style, once more slowly with exaggerated pauses.

Plaister, Ted. Developing Listening Comprehension for ESL Students: The Kingdom of Kochen. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1976. A/intermediate/scripted/IS. 20 lectures for improving listening comprehension, understanding lecture-style language and developing vocabulary and note-taking skills. A mythical kingdom in Southeast Asia provides the subject matter. Masking and cloze devices show students how to learn to listen. Since the first step is listening to the tape while reading the transcript. some teachers may doubt the effectiveness of the method employed. Each lecture is repeated 5 times to allow all the exercises to be done without rewinding, but considerably adding to the bulk and cost of the package. The speech on the tape is almost natural, if rather slow.

Ravensdale, A. Listening Comprehension Practice in English. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1973. (Not seen)

Rost, Michael A. Listening Contours. Tempe, Arizona: Lingual House, 1979. A/intermediate/scripted/IS. 23 units with short talks (1.5-6 minutes) on topics of general interest. The student must fill in or complete the outline given for the early lessons and make outlines in the later lessons. Speech on the tape is natural if slightly anticeptic.

Russell, Michael. Aural Tests. London: Evans Brothers, Ltd. (Not seen) 20 m-c papers; questions on pronunciation, stress and a story.

Sims, Jean and Patricia Wilcox Peterson. Better Listening Skills. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1981. A/intermediate/scripted/IS. 5 lectures with numerous pre-listening reading and writing exercises, some T/F questions after the lecture and instructions for taking notes. Actually very little listening practice. (Tapes not heard)

So, Wu Yi. Bridging the Gap Between Learning English in the Classroom and Using English in Lecture Halls. East Lansing, Michigan: Instructional Media Center, Michigan State University, 1979, 2 volumes. A/advanced/scripted. 53 units, including lectures, speeches and dialogues; a language lab program to develop listening skills for following university-level lectures. Exercises to help students develop vocabulary, guess meanings from context, outline lectures, etc. Some of the exercises such

as pronunciation, grammar and dictation seem to have little to do with listening comprehension at this level. Judging from the tape supplied with the sample lesson, the speech on the tape is unnatural, being an inept reading of a written text, not a true lecture style.

Templer, J.C. Listening Comprehension Tests. London: Heinemann. (Not seen) Practice for the Cambridge First Certificate Oral Paper (paper 4).

Templer, J.C. Further Listening Comprehension Tests. London: Heinemann. (Not seen) Slightly more difficult version of the above.

IV. COURSES AND OTHER MATERIALS WITH GOOD LISTENING COMPONENTS

Abbs, Brian and Ingrid Freebairn. Building Strategies (Strategies 2). London: Longman, 1979. B/intermediate/?. One or two excellent listening exercises in each unit. Speech on the tapes is highly realistic, close to authentic. The speakers use several varieties of English including American and non-native speaker accents, some of which may be faked.

Abbs, Brian and Ingrid Freebairn. Starting Strategies (Strategies 1). London: Longman, 1977. B/beginning/scripted. One or two excellent short listening exercises in each unit. Speech on the tape simulates authentic speech, even for basic exercises.

Abbs, Brian et.al. Challenges. London: Longman, 1978. B/intermediate/scripted. 6 units with lots of listening exercises of uneven quality, but some are very good. Tapes also good. (Also has videos)

Alexander, L.G. and Roy Kingsbury. Follow Me. London: Longman and BBC, 1979. A/beginning/scripted/IS. Two good listening exercises in each of 60 units. Speakers can be nauseatingly stagy, especially to American listeners. (Also has videos)

Alexander, L.G. Mainline Beginners A and B. London: Longman, 1978-80. B/beginning/scripted. Many excellent short listening exercises scattered throughout these books. Tape is excellent, with even basic exercises simulating authentic speech.

The Bellcrest Series: English for Business. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973. B/advanced/scripted/IS. A course in business English for radio and television. The 13 radio programs maintain a good interest level and are well produced. There are also 13 extra listening comprehension passages with additional material not necessary to the story. These are available along with structure drills, but at a rather high cost. Both radio programs and comprehension passages have open-ended comprehension questions, but fuller development of the material, which would be highly appropriate with this series and at this level, must be done by the teacher. (Also has videos)

Curtin, John and Peter Viney. Survival English. London: Mary Glasgow Publications, 1979. B/low intermediate/scripted/IS. 20 units designed to take a businessman through his trip to London. Listening exercises are usually simply dialogue completion/dictation, but a few comprehension questions are scattered here and there. The tapes are rather stagy and the "tourist" is frequently unbearably rude.

Howatt, Anthony et.al. A Modern Course in Business English. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967. B/intermediate/authentic but careful. One interview-style dialogue with comprehension questions per each of the first 9 units.

Norman, Susan. Export English. London: BBC, 1980. B/intermediate/scripted. Business English course with one rather long listening passage with T/F and open-ended questions per each of 10 units. Speakers are fairly clear and obviously performing.

V. OTHER MATERIALS

Asher, James J. Learning Another Language Through Actions: The Complete Teacher's Guidebook. Los Gatos, California: Sky Oaks Productions, 1977. beginners. (No tape) Teacher's source book for the Total Physical Response approach to teaching language through listening comprehension. Theoretical discussion of the approach plus lesson plans for up to 150 hours of classroom instruction in English. The first 40 hours or so are a good introduction to and application of the approach; later lessons use

less TPR and more techniques gleaned from other methods, but give ideas to start from.

Erway, Ella A. Listening; A Programmed Approach. Second edition. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979. A/advanced/scripted. A listening course for secondary or college level native speakers, for teaching the skills of critical listening using speeches by public figures in Vital Speeches. Programmed format. Included here as a source of ideas for teachers who want to develop materials for critical listening. (Tape not heard)

McClintock, John and Börje Stern. Let's Listen. London: Heinemann, 1980. B/beginning-intermediate/scripted. Stage 1 has 24 units and stage 2 has 15 units. Most units consist of picture problems; the student must pick out from a set of pictures the person or object being described on the tape, or decide if statements about a picture are true or false. The other units are either standard m-c comprehension questions about narrative passages or m-c problems requiring choice of a correct response to a situation described on the tape. Some units are much better than others, but interesting on the whole. Speech on the tape is dramatic radio style.

McDavid, Jr., Raven I. and John T. Muri. Americans Speaking, A Dialect Recording Prepared for the National Council of Teachers of English. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1967. This record and the accompanying pamphlet were produced to study dialects of American English but may provide source material for making listening exercises. 6 persons, each speaking a different dialect of American English, read the same set passage and then talk freely on a subject of their own choosing.

Nelson, Gayle and Thomas Winters. ESL Operations: Techniques for Teaching While Doing. Rowley, Massachusetts: Newbury House, 1980. low intermediate. (No tape) Teacher's source materials for action chains, as used in the Total Physical Response approach. Chains are short and easy to teach, and suggestions for follow-up are included.

Romijn, Elizabeth and Contee Seely. Live Action English for Foreign Students. San Francisco: The Alemany Press, 1979. low intermediate. (No

tape) Teacher's source material for action chains, as used in the Total Physical Response approach. Chains are up to 17 items long and use very informal English. All are suitable for children; some are too silly for adults.

Scott, Wendy. Are You Listening? Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980. B/beginning/scripted. Listening comprehension materials for children. 42 short lessons with many kinds of listening exercises using join-the-dots, coloring, cut-outs, etc. Speech on the tape is very realistic.

Taylor, Harvey M. Action English. Tokyo: World Times of Japan, Inc., (1975-77?). (Not seen) Also known as "Michigan Action English."

VI. SUGGESTIONS FOR CHOOSING AND EVALUATING LISTENING MATERIALS

1. Listening skills

Lundsteen (1979:66-71) describes the general and critical listening skills taught to child native speakers. Adapting them for adult non-native speakers gives the following:

A. General listening skills

1) Selecting and remembering significant facts and details
2) Following a sequence in a narrative or argument
3) Following oral directions
4) Selecting the main idea
5) Summarizing and paraphrasing
6) Understanding connotative meanings of words in context
7) Listening for implications (unstated messages)
8) Making inferences about the context
9) Extrapolating (predicting what might come)

B. Critical listening skills

10) Identifying the purpose(s) of the speaker and the message (to instruct, persuade, entertain, etc.)
11) Identifying and categorizing facts and opinions (distinguishing fact from opinion, reason from emotion, etc.)
12) Judging validity and adequacy of ideas and arguments
13) Identifying bias, affective loading, etc. (i.e., noting the use of intonation, "loaded" words, etc.)

C. Body language, gestures, etc. and their meanings in different cultures

This is a hierarchy of skills from the simplest to the most difficult, yet most of the listening materials described above concentrate on the most elementary. Very few have exercises for teaching the more difficult general skills, and even fewer make any attempt at teaching critical listening. Typical exercises have students fill in blanks or choose the correct answer concerning some specific fact mentioned in the passage; students are seldom asked to analyze the speaker's logic, use of examples, motives, etc.

2. Characteristics of good listening comprehension materials

Taylor (1979:237-38) gives the "characteristics which should be present in a maximally effective language lab comprehension series." Since they could just as well be applied to listening comprehension materials in general, we list them here:

> 1) Student comprehension of the tape materials is constantly checked. 2) Simple responses are required from complex information, not the reverse. 3) The directions and comments to the students reflect normal, live classroom usage. 4) Background noise and sound effects are included to encourage students to listen selectively for information. 5) Students must commit themselves to some active choice or written answer in response to the recorded information; passive listening is not allowed. 6) A story line with recurring identifiable characters provides an interpretable social setting for the language introduced. 7) An explanation of grammar points, the meaning of new vocabulary, and the cultural implications of the language heard are provided in a form the student can understand - in the student's native language if possible. 9) (sic) No student has access to a script of what is heard, in order to force reliance upon listening abilities alone. 9) The types of response tasks constantly change to encourage close attention to the material on the tape.

3. Nature and quality of listening comprehension

a. Listening versus reading/writing/speaking

Most listening comprehension textbooks provide the learner with a reading passage, which introduces the recorded material, and a list of difficult vocabulary items. But this information, together with the information contained in the questions themselves, often enables the learner to answer several of the questions without hearing the tape. To take one example, exercise 1 of Unit 1.1 in Underwood's Have You Heard...? consists of 8 T/F questions. The learner can find the answers to questions 1, 2 and 6 in the introductory matter and the answer to 5 in

exercise 2, question 5. In addition, the answer to question 7 is common sense, so a total of 5 out of 8 "listening comprehension" questions can be answered correctly without doing any listening at all. While preparation for listening in the form of introductory readings may be necessary to get the students ready to listen, there should be a clear distinction between questions about the introductory matter and questions about the listening passage itself.

Some exercises in listening texts by their nature can be done without listening (e.g., cloze), and others have nothing to do with listening but are included to teach other skills, to provide opportunities for class discussion, or just to inflate the price of the book. For example, if the learner hears a conversation about sports and is then asked to list all the sports mentioned in the conversation, that is a test of listening, although on a low level. But if the next exercise asks the learner, as it frequently does, to list the sports the learner likes personally, that exercise has nothing to do with listening. M-c questions are often guilty of offering answers in various grammatical forms, so that one which is correct in terms of the content is also the only one correct grammatically - a test of grammar, not listening.

b. Listening in sequence versus listening for overall meaning

The order of items in vocabulary lists and the sequence of the comprehension questions themselves often follow the order of the recorded message, so the learner can listen for the answer to one question at a time without making any effort to comprehend the passage as a whole. Taylor (1981:46) points out that as a result of this spoon-feeding, "the student thus loses the essential opportunity of listening to real speech to find out how much can be comprehended in spite of unknown vocabulary."

c. Listening level versus speaking level

There is sometimes a wide discrepancy in the demands made on the learner by different exercises in the same book. It is not unusual to find textbooks which present the learner with difficult comprehension questions on authentic speech, itself extremely difficult for the non-native to decode. But these high-level exercises are followed by the most inane drills, suitable only for beginning learners. On the other hand, simple passages spoken or read slowly or clearly may be followed by difficult open-ended questions that require the learner to reword and rework the material.

d. Teaching versus testing

Exercises should perform a teaching function, such as providing the learner with an opportunity to induce grammatical rules, or pointing out distinctions that the learner may not have been aware of before (e.g., the relationship between meaning and intonation patterns). Most listening comprehension exercises do not teach anything new, but just test how well the learner has decoded the speech on the tape.

e. Classroom versus the real world

M-c and T/F questions have long been a stand-by in the language classroom, especially for testing comprehension. While they have their place, one can imagine a learner outside the classroom being completely unable to answer a simple question because no one provided 3 answers to choose from. Exercises that provide opportunities to listen and act as one does in the real world are necessary, such as exercises that require students to fill in forms, take notes on short messages, find the way on a map, etc.

4. Speech and speakers

The speech on the recordings should be checked for speed, fluency and naturalness. Although it has long been a truism in the profession that foreign language learners are not helped in the long run by unnaturally slow or otherwise distorted speech, publishers are still producing tapes of this kind. Each set of materials must be checked, since regrettably neither the eminence of the author nor the prominence of the publisher is a guarantee that the tapes will be any good.

On the other hand, there are a number of tapes on the market on which the speech is a formal radio-lecture style, artificially perfect and often delivered at a high speed. These recitations of written texts lack the redundancy, hesitations, etc. characteristic of natural speech. It has often been pointed out in the literature that this type of material presents the learner with listening tasks that are more difficult than those met in reality. (Snow and Perkins 1979:52-53; Chastain 1979:83).

One useful feature of some textbooks is the clear identification of the speakers on the tape by name; this gives the learner a chance to learn to recognize their voices and maintains a continuity from lesson to lesson. To help the learner identify and classify the varieties of English used in the recordings, speakers should be identified at least by place of birth, dialect spoken, age and occupation.

For those teaching EFL the choice of British or American speech on the tape should not be a problem. British materials often include many British accents and dialects as well as American, Australian and other Englishes, and sometimes the English speech of non-native speakers. American materials lag far behind in this respect; as someone remarked at the 1980 TESOL convention, "It's easier to become the president of the United States than to get a job recording tapes for teaching English," implying that then-President Carter's southern accent would be frowned upon by TESOL publishers. Taylor (1979:233) notes that "the student needs to understand a great number of the varieties of spoken English;" he says that "students are quite sensitive to this need." Doubtless ignorance of the British materials led him to the erroneous conclusion that "few ESL/EFL courses teach toward it."

5. Tape quality

Teachers should check tapes carefully to judge the quality of the recording. Look for background noise, clarity of sound, use of sound effects and other technical points. Too many otherwise good materials are marred by "white noise" (humming, etc) in the background, or sound like they were recorded in the office next door with the typewriter going and the door slamming.

VII. Conclusion

Writing in 1979, Snow and Perkins "noted a paucity of listening comprehension materials for the advanced student." (1979:52) Either their note-taking skills leave something to be desired or they are thinking only of materials in American English; as the list above shows, a large number of materials for advanced learners, mainly British, have been on the market since the mid 1970's and even before. There has been a recent boom in the publication of listening comprehension materials, and American publishers are finally getting the message. But some of the most recent materials, British and American, are clearly "bandwagon"; they are being produced at a speed that precludes the careful classroom testing necessary and results in materials with no exercises, tapes with no pauses for answers, or tapes and materials so badly put together that not even a highly educated native speaker of English could decipher them.

We have attempted to make this bibliography as complete as possible; any ommissions should be attributed to ignorance rather than disapproval.

We regret being unable to include the many materials produced in Japan. The authors have no intention of endorsing any of the materials listed and welcome additions or comments from readers. Please write to Bernard Susser, English Department, Baika Junior College, Shukunosho 2-19-5, Ibaraki-shi, Osaka Prefecture 567, Japan.

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